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# QUALITY GROWTH COMMISSION

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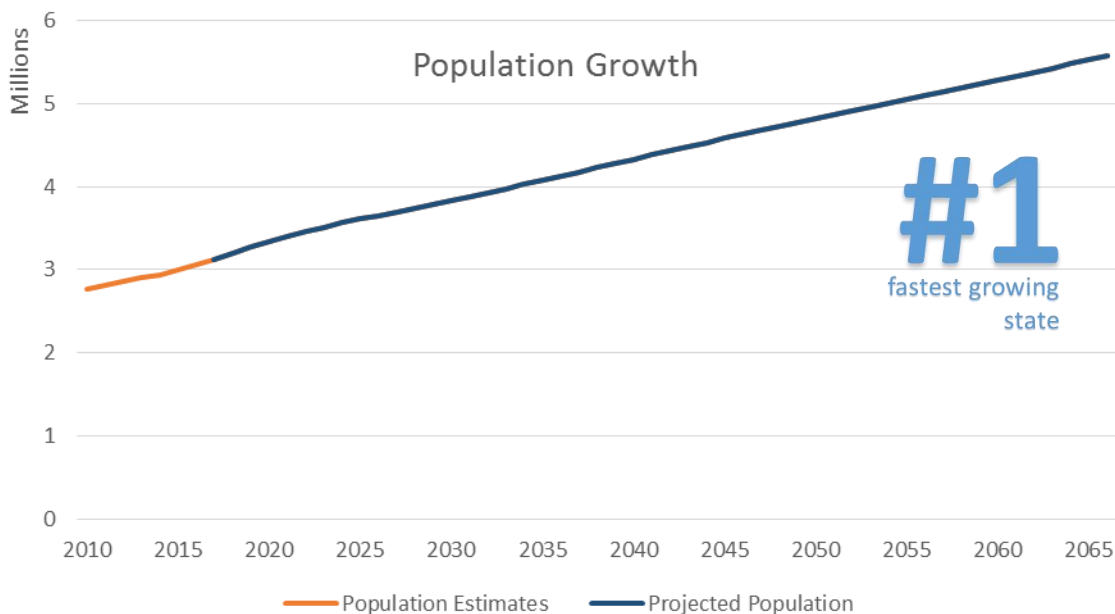
## 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

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## Introduction – We're a growing state

As expected, 2017 has continued to follow a trend of rapid population growth, urban development, and the myriad opportunities and challenges that accompany such growth. As a Commission, we were pleased to do our part, along with the Legislature, local governments, interested stakeholders, and private land owners, to help influence Utah's growth in a way that will provide for a more positive future for generations to come. While it would be impossible to detail all of the positive efforts that have improved the quality of our state, the following are a few of the chief accomplishments directed by the Commission as well as a brief overview of some of the other critical efforts that deserve mention.



\*Population numbers based on projections by the Gardner Policy Institute. The US Census Bureau has ranked Utah as the fastest growing state in the nation after releasing the most recent population estimates.

## LeRay McAllister Critical Lands Conservation Fund

In the 2017 General Session, the Utah State Legislature appropriated \$500,000 to the LeRay McAllister Critical Lands Conservation Fund to assist in preserving or restoring open land for wildlife habitat, cultural or recreational use, watershed protection, and agricultural production. This funding has been used to solicit valuable projects from across the state. The total request from all applicants totaled \$781,800 in funding (though one project eventually withdrew its application). Ultimately, \$281,800 was awarded to three projects that will leverage a total of nearly \$4.4 million dollars in total project costs – over \$16 leveraged for every state dollar invested. These conservation dollars will help ensure future recreation access to both a world-class national park and a close-to-home urban trail network, provide flood mitigation, preserve working agricultural lands, preserve critical habitat for key wildlife species (including sage grouse), leave undeveloped

parcels in pristine watersheds, and preserve the scenery and wide open spaces that contribute to Utah's high quality of life. Each of these projects involved willing land owners who contributed to the projects' success.

The following are the successful projects from the 2017 LeRay McAllister funding cycle:

- **Simon Gulch – Washington County**
  - The Simon Gulch Parcel includes 880 acres of land adjacent to Zion National Park and includes 1 mile of the world-renowned Zion Narrows trail. The project was ranked in the top 5 projects *nationally* for the Forest Legacy Program. In addition to preserving recreation access and scenic quality for Zion National Park, this parcel preserves wildlife habitat and watershed values. The project was awarded \$110,000 from the LeRay McAllister Fund toward an anticipated total project cost of nearly \$3.4 million.
- **Weber River Parkway – Weber County**
  - This 12.6 acre parcel provides flood mitigation along the Weber River and provides key spawning habitat for the Bluehead Sucker – a sensitive species. The parcel will also provide an easement to help complete the Weber County trails system and will link the Weber River Parkway trail with the Bonneville Shoreline Trail. The project was awarded \$60,000 from the LeRay McAllister Fund toward an anticipated total project cost of \$208,300.
- **Wright Ranch – Summit County**
  - The Wright Ranch is an 841 acre parcel along Chalk Creek East of Coalville. In addition to preserving working agricultural lands, the Wright Ranch also contains critical habitat for the Sage Grouse and will serve as part of a larger strategic network that will preserve wildlife corridors in this portion of Summit County. This project was awarded \$111,800 from the LeRay McAllister Fund and contributes to an anticipated total project cost of \$795,500.

## Recommendation to the Commission for the Stewardship of Public Lands

Over the past year, the Quality Growth Commission spent several meetings highlighting some potential issues regarding extraterritorial jurisdiction (as defined in UCA 10-8-15) and the current and potential conflicts that may arise as more cities reach first class status through population growth. The Commission for the Stewardship of Public Lands requested that the Quality Growth Commission draft recommendations to the Legislature regarding this issue in the Wasatch Canyons. After months of reviewing and discussing the topic and recognizing that the depth and complexity of this issue would require expert knowledge on many diverse topics such as water quality, water rights, property rights, and forest health - in addition to thorough public participation, the Quality Growth Commission ultimately recommended that the Legislature appoint a body of subject-matter experts who could provide a more rigorous analysis of the diverse and complicated issues involved in this complex issue.

## Your Utah Your Future Awards

In May, 2017, the Quality Growth Commission joined with Envision Utah and Governor Gary Herbert in presenting the Your Utah, Your Future Awards (formerly the Quality Growth Awards). These awards were presented to eight Utah-based teams and organizations for projects, plans, and developments that improved to the quality of life of Utah by exemplifying the principles found in the four cornerstones of the Your Utah, Your Future Vision for 2050 effort. Awards went to projects focused on community design, energy efficiency, emissions reduction and education. The following are the Your Utah, Your Future Awards winners by category:

### **Cornerstone One: A Network of Quality Communities**

***The Meadows at Riverbend***  
***South Salt Lake East Streetcar Neighborhood***

### **Cornerstone Two: Homes, Buildings, Landscaping and Cars of the Future**

***Ivory Homes***  
***Drive Electric Program***

### **Cornerstone Three: A Thriving Rural Utah**

***Rocky Mountain Power's Small Business Direct Program Moab Area Housing Resource Guide***

### **Cornerstone Four: People Prepared for the Future**

***Utah Aerospace Pathways***  
***Salt Lake Community College Promise***

## Other Efforts

In addition to the efforts of the Quality Growth Commission to enhance quality of life and prepare for the continued growth of the state, many other efforts have and are contributing to our unquestionable progress and deserve mention. While it is impossible to highlight all of the valued contributions made daily by dedicated residents, non-profit organizations, local governments, associations, policy makers, and businesses, the following high-level efforts provide insight into why Utah continues to experience an enviable quality of life.

### Transportation Governance Task Force

The population is projected to nearly double by 2065, however, few believe we can double the capacity of our transportation systems to meet the future demands inherent in this growth. As such, the Legislature created the Transportation Governance Task Force to explore how to maximize current and future transportation investments. The Task Force has met throughout the summer and has involved a broad group of experts and stakeholders to study in-depth the funding, land use, and governance issues associated with

transportation in Utah. While still in process, this legislative-led effort has already identified key policies and strategies that will help provide sustainable funding for an integrated, reliable transportation system that will improve access to jobs, housing, education, and recreation through the multi-modal approach demanded by Utah's burgeoning high-skilled workforce.

Additional information on the task force along with their latest recommendations can be found on the Utah State Legislative website at: <https://le.utah.gov/asp/interim/Commit.asp?Year=2017&Com=TSKTGF>

## Utah Life Elevated 2020 Initiative

Utah has enjoyed enviable success in maintaining a robust and growing economy while maintaining a high quality of life. This success has been noticed and has contributed to making Utah one of the fastest growing states in the nation. This growth brings tremendous opportunities, however, it also creates certain challenges as it creates greater demand for public services, places a greater burden on the amenities that provide such a high quality of life. In an effort to maintain economic momentum and an enviable quality of life, Governor Herbert has launched a legacy initiative to maintain this economic growth and quality of life. This strategy, known as Utah Life Elevated 2020, is a collaborative, statewide growth strategy to further enhance our quality of life and ensure the future prosperity for all Utahns. The four key objectives include:

- Effective and efficient government
- Qualified workforce
- Thriving communities
- Equitable and competitive revenue

Additional information on the Utah Life Elevated 2020 framework can be found at <http://gomb.utah.gov/Utah-life-elevated-2020/>

## Point of the Mountain Development Commission

As the booming population centers of Salt Lake and Utah counties converge at the region known as “the point of the mountain,” an economic synergy has created a unique explosion of economic and residential growth in this part of the state. In the midst of this incredible growth pressure, the state prison property will soon be vacated and several other large parcels remain undeveloped. These large, underdeveloped parcels and state-owned land in the midst of explosive residential and commercial growth provides a unique opportunity to shape the future of the region. Through a nation-wide search process, the Legislative Point of the Mountain Development Commission has contracted with Envision Utah to lead a public visioning process to plan for the future of this emerging center. While the effort is focused on a strategically significant, but limited, geography, the effort is yielding valuable information and planning that will influence the growth of the entire region and the quality of life of the entire state.

Additional information can be found at <https://pointofthemountainfuture.org/commission/>

## Water

Water is essential to life and the availability or lack of water will either stimulate or stagnate future growth and development. In the past, Utah has had access to relatively cheap and reliable high quality water sources. However, a growing population places added strain on a limited resource – a challenge that will be magnified by uncertain changes in climate. Recognizing this challenge, the Governor convened a team of stakeholders with diverse and extensive backgrounds in various aspects of water to form the State Water Strategy Advisory Team in 2013. After years of earnest discussion, public meetings, written comments, and online surveys, the team produced and submitted a state water strategy in July of 2017. The Recommended State Water Strategy document will provide invaluable direction as water managers and policy makers navigate the unique challenges of a growing population in an arid, water-constrained region. The Recommended State Water Strategy can be found at <http://www.envisionutah.org/projects/utah-water-strategy>

## Outdoor Recreation

One key aspect that enhances the quality of life in Utah is the rich access we enjoy to world-class outdoor recreation. With its first-in-the-nation Office of Outdoor Recreation, Utah has become a proven leader in recognizing the importance of outdoor recreation and planning to ensure continued success in maintaining and enhancing our outdoor recreation amenities. Over the past two years, the Office of Outdoor Recreation has brought together stakeholders from throughout the state with regional summits that have brought together over 500 people each year in an effort to continue the momentum of achieving healthier residents, communities, and an improved outdoor recreation economy. Additionally, through a newly-imposed transient room tax, the Legislature created and provided a stable funding stream for the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure. This new funding will be used to leverage resources to expand and enhance recreation infrastructure throughout the state – expanding trails and other amenities in conjunction with local communities that will help distribute the increasing demand for outdoor recreation opportunities as our residential population and out-of-state visitation continues to grow.

Additionally, the Division of State Parks and Recreation continues to enhance the quality of life in our state through ongoing efforts to enhance the unique opportunities for outdoor recreation available at each of the 43 state parks and on trails and waterways throughout the state. By increasing lodging opportunities, expanding the suite of activities available in parks, and helping to increase and maintain trail miles throughout the state, our Division of State Parks and Recreation continues to create tangible improvements that enhance the quality of life of Utah's growing population.

## About the Commission

The Quality Growth Commission is comprised of representatives from diverse backgrounds and from throughout the state. The following are the currently-appointed members who serve on the Commission.

### **Member**

LuAnn Adams  
Mike Styler  
Greg Todd  
Erin Mendenhall  
Jack Thomas  
Steve Pruden  
Ron Iacono  
Randy Day  
Randy Parker  
Kent Bushman  
Ashley Korenblat

### **Representing**

Dept. of Agriculture  
Dept. of Natural Resources  
Duchesne County Commission (UAC)  
Salt Lake City Council (ULCT)  
Park City (ULCT)  
Tooele City Council (ULCT)  
Home Builders Association  
Utah Association of Realtors  
Farm Bureau  
Utah Farmer's Union  
At-large private sector

### **Occupation/Background**

Commissioner of Agriculture  
Director of DNR  
Oil development/sales  
Public policy and advocacy  
Mayor/Architect/Planner  
Educator  
Developer  
Real Estate  
VP National Gov't Affairs  
President of UFU, Rancher  
CEO of Western Spirit Cycling  
and Managing Director of Public  
Lands Solutions